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EAST EUROPE BRANCH NOTES

OCI #0584/74

6 June 1974

BULGARIA

Upgrading Its Representation in the US

Bulgaria is sending a new team of officials to the US who seem specifically chosen to dispel the notion that all Bulgarian officials are conservative. Leading the group is the new ambassador, Lyubomir Popov, a competent and impressive career diplomat with considerable experience in US affairs. Popov, under pressure to improve commercial and economic ties, begins his assignment with misgivings and some apprehension. He arrived in Washington in early May and will present his credentials soon.

Bulgarian press organs also are expanding and upgrading their US representation. The party daily, Rabotnichesko Delo (RD), is opening a Washington bureau and has named a prominent journalist to set up operations this summer. At the same time, the New York correspondent of the official Bulgarian new service, BTA, has been recalled; his replacement may be the seasoned and competent correspondent who first opened the office in 1958. The US Embassy in Sofia describes these new appointees as relatively "liberal" officials with reputations for "free-thinking, fairly objective styles."

In a related conversation deputy foreign trade minister Lukanov recently claimed that Bulgaria plans to open a consulate in Chicago as soon as possible. Its primary mission would be to develop trade, expanding on the contacts with Chicago-based companies which Lukanov cultivated during his visit there last summer.

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State Dept. review completed

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